



NEWS

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Interagency Study of Oil and Gas Resources in Five U.S. Basins Issued

Study fulfills obligation of Act Signed by the Clinton Administration

WASHINGTON - Interior's Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Rebecca Watson today delivered to the Congress a study of U.S. oil and gas resources in five western basins. The interagency scientific inventory was prepared at the request of Congress under the provisions of the 2000 Energy Policy and Conservation Act.

Under the Act [P.L.106-469], signed into law by former President Clinton, federal agencies are tasked with developing a national inventory of all oil and gas resources and reserves beneath federal lands. The report released today is the first study designed to fulfill this obligation. Additional studies will be initiated to inventory oil and gas beyond the areas studied in the report that Watson released today.

"This report represents the first time Congress has asked for a study that provides not only an estimate of oil and gas resources and reserves, but also information on any constraints that may limit development of these energy resources," Watson said. "This inventory is not a decision-making document. It is a planning tool for the Congress that identifies areas of high and low oil and gas potential and the nature of constraints to the development of those resources in the basins in the interior West."

The report, titled "Scientific Inventory of Onshore Federal Lands Oil and Gas Resources and Reserves and the Extent and Nature of Restrictions or Impediments to Their Development," evaluates the five areas in the West that contain the bulk of the natural gas and much of the oil resources under federal ownership in the onshore United States. It examined energy resources located in five major geologic basins in the interior West: the Paradox/San Juan Basins in Colorado, Utah and New Mexico; the Uinta/Piceance Basins in Colorado and Utah; the Greater Green River Basin in Wyoming, Colorado and Utah; the Powder River Basin in Montana and Wyoming; and the Montana Thrust Belt in Montana.

These five basins encompass nearly 104 million acres of the interior West, of which 59 million acres are managed by the federal government. The inventory includes lands managed by all federal agencies, such as the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service and the USDA Forest Service. It also includes privately owned lands where the federal government owns the subsurface minerals.

The report provides estimates of oil and gas resources and reserves beneath the five basins and an inventory of the extent and nature of limitations to development. The report does not make any policy recommendations in response to its findings. The oil and gas figures are based on U.S. Geological Survey's undiscovered technically recoverable-resource estimates and the Energy Information Administration's proved-

reserve calculations.

The key findings of the inventory are as follows: An estimated 57 percent of oil and 63 percent of gas are available under standard stipulations, and only 15 percent of oil and 12 percent of gas are totally unavailable. The remaining oil and gas are available with increasing restrictions on development. Land that is closed to development contains comparatively little oil and gas potential.

For Congress, federal land-managing agencies and the citizens they serve, this inventory is a planning tool. It will provide federal land managers with additional information to help them develop management plans for the lands under their jurisdiction

Note: Copies of the report can be obtained by writing to the Bureau of Land Management, Office of Public Affairs, 1849 C Street, N.W., MS-LS 406, Washington, D.C. 20240. The report is also available on the Internet at www.doi.gov/epca/ The Fact sheet can be found at www.doi.gov/factsheet/

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